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THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

MISSIONS

The Moral Impact of the Gospel

The January *International Review of Missions* contains the record of thirty years' work among the African women of the Congo by Mrs. R. H. C. Graham. The operating center of Mrs. Graham's work is San Salvador, the capital of the ancient kingdom of Congo. Her work has been carried on for the most part among the women and children. The women were found accessible because the matriarchal system prevails on the Lower Congo and kinship counts through the maternal side; the eldest son of the eldest sister is the heir of the chief or the inheritor of his uncle's property and not his father's. Thus the woman's status is one not found in many other countries:

The head mother of the clan is greatly respected and consulted upon all family and financial questions. If there is no male heir to the chieftom a woman can inherit the position. Many women are chosen as councillors in the different villages, hearing and judging important country palavers.

The fear of being childless is the greatest burden of the Congo woman. This fear is the cause of many harmful forms of sex stimulation, as fireside tales, visits to the men's lodges, licentious dances, and the revolting Ndembo custom. By this latter practice, about twenty or thirty people of both sexes feign death, have a kind of funeral, and are carried away to a stockade outside the town, where they remain from three months to three years. Gross immoralities are practiced. Amid rejoicing the medicine man after bringing them to life brings them back to town. Then they are given the privilege of injuring, stealing, or even killing. Many harmful superstitions surround birth. The missionaries have attacked these malpractices in a sane man-

ner. Knowing the desire of the native women for children, they have done everything to promote the begetting of healthy children. The highest moral levels of biblical teaching are used to stimulate a healthier physical and moral life, and these women are appreciative of moral questions. They know too well the terrible consequences to health and happiness that follow from many of their practices. These mothers have often encouraged their little girls, about to be given in marriage, to go to the missionary for protection. Many of these women who have a Christian conception gain large influence in the villages and are consulted in regard to difficulties. Now that there is a splendid addition of doctors and nurses, relief from suffering and the advance of enlightenment will move steadily on.

There are periodical training classes for husbands and wives. Some of the men after passing an elementary examination enter the Kimpese Training College for a three years' teaching course and their wives accompany them. Much practical work is taught:

These women are also taught sewing, but have little time as a rule for needlework. In these classes for teachers I also give elementary talks on physiology and obstetrics, the prophylactic treatment of disease, and the spiritual and physical meaning of marriage, and on simple domestic economy. I always devote the first ten minutes of the classes to Scripture.

Some of the results are: the Ndembo custom has become almost extinct; the Christian families remain away from heathen dances; Christianity has given fatherhood a new meaning; much has been done to prevent early wifehood and the practice of polygamy; there is a revolutionized home life with brighter and stronger children.

The youths have been trained in many industrial arts. The church is the source of individual, social, and national reform. Unless detrimental to physical and moral life the native customs are not interfered with. The moral force of the gospel is far-reaching in its effects.

Japanese Liberalism and the Future

The December *Japan Review* has a brief article interpreting the present liberal movement in Japan and its relation to other countries. The writer recommends Professor John Dewey's recent comprehensive analysis in the *Dial* of what is going on among the intellectual circle of the empire. The future promotion of this new liberalism is a challenging matter at present.

Since the adoption forty years ago of the German system of national policy and militarism, there has arisen among the more liberal element a craving for democracy. While recent occurrences by aggressive European nations have validated the severe national policy and repressed to a large extent the liberal aspirations of a considerable group in Japan, yet the ideal of freedom has always thrived among the younger generations, especially those who cherished American and British ideals of freedom. The move of President Wilson against German militarism stimulated the Japanese liberals to real action. Triumph over German militarism brought about the triumph of liberalism over militarism in Japan. Though bureaucracy and militarism continue in power, it looks as if their death knell has been tolled. But the real enemies of the liberal movement in Japan are outside that country. That "particularism" which tends to generalize from particulars of a fragmentary nature denounces Japan as a "second Germany," "last autocracy to be smashed," "greatest menace in Asia," and like generalizations. These phrases often come from the pens of respectable writers and thinkers who have

founded their accusation upon a very incomplete knowledge of the complex currents of Japanese national life. Maliciously created news and opinions enter in to prejudice the issue. All this breeds enmity instead of a co-operative and helpful international understanding. In fact Japanese militarists seized the recent unkind public opinion in America as a pretext to resist any restriction of their military preparedness. The attitude of the outside world will have much to do with the development of a healthy democratization in Japan, or with its rejection and consequent bloodshed at some future period.

How Missions Denationalize Indians

In the *International Review of Missions* for October K. T. Paul, O.B.E., makes claims for elements in Hindu culture that are worthy of fulfilment in Christianity. All of the great missionary groups of the Western world were of puritan birth and hence iconoclastic. The timid infant church, perhaps fearing the inclusion of evil with the good elements of Hindu tradition, divorced the Christian as completely as possible from the Hindu community. This leaves him ignorant of the folklore, art, literature, and great religious life of the country. There are in the life of the peoples of India many noble approaches to the religious life of the Old and New Testaments. The stories of Bharata's attitude toward Rama and Yudishtrá's toward Duryodhana are fulfilled in David's heroic attitude toward Saul. There is a kinship between the supreme sacrifice of Jonathan and that of Rama. There is a suggestion of Calvary in the secret of Harischandra. How can this atmosphere be created in the Indian Christian home? The translation of the best hymns by non-Indians ignores the form and poetic spirit of India, and the music to which these hymns are set is foreign and artificial. The art, poetry, and music so dear to the heart of India could be utilized

with great advantage in the Christianization of India. They are now tragically ignored. One has said: "When the middle castes come into the church they will first throw these hymns out of the window."

The missionary finds in the Indian, whether Moslem or Hindu, an abiding sense of the spiritual which forms a fertile soil for the mystical realities of the Christian religion. All material elements are subsidiary to great spiritual ends, and it is a lamentable denationalization to have them thought of as ends in themselves. The Hindu is not without God. What he needs is the fulfilling and ennobling conceptions of Jesus in personal morality as some Western communities need them in business morality. From the Hindu caste point of view the need of a separate community for Christians was inevitable, but that is changing, and "one hopes for the speedy arrival of the ever-expanding church, observing both sacraments, but without the social ties broken in their community, which for this reason can no longer be called 'Hindu' nor marked off as 'Christian.'"

India has a valuable social heritage: the Western individual is born into certain rights; the Indian into certain obligations. This sense of solidarity is a valuable asset. There is a deep sense of loyalty to family and to village. The mission boarding-school takes the child out of his natural surroundings at an early age and keeps him until he is almost an adult. There is a stunting of precious loyalties and in many cases an unbridgeable gulf between the boarding-school and the old family. The child and Indian parents suffer greatly as a result. New York reformers work through the neighborhood settlement and would not think of boarding-schools. Eton and Rugby have their place for a period during youth, but their teachers are not Swiss or even Americans. Great historical traditions are kept alive. In depriving the Indian home of the developing life of the child through

those years of development mentioned above, there is a tragic loss to the family and the child. The fault is with the system and not intended by the missionaries. "There can be no substitute for the home, particularly to an Indian girl." There lies in this the possible evil of the Western class system. The Indian Christian community is most liable to it. The caste system is a curse and should not have added to it the un-Christian class system of the West. While missions are not responsible for this resultant from the impact of the West upon the East, the mission boarding-schools do not help to keep the evil out. If the Christian development is integrated with the Hindu community through its family and social life, the heroic sacrifices of the missionaries will result in a vaster fruitage for individual, family, community, and India.

Personal Relationships between Indians and Europeans

Mr. William Paton, from recent experience in India, attempts, in the October number of the *International Review of Missions*, an analysis of the attitudes of Indians and Europeans toward each other. A spirit of change, political and nationalistic, is moving swiftly over India. The more educated have the greatest consciousness of things Indian, but even the great masses of agricultural population are affected in a political sense. National feeling and prejudices are running high. There is a suspicion of the bona fides of the British government in regard to the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme. While this attitude may be an attempt to safeguard the whittling down in practice of these measures of responsible government, it shows that they do not trust our good will. The attempt of a European on a university staff to raise the standard is suspected as an attempt to deprive the Indian students of their graduate status. Both the European and Indian

press show bigotry and misunderstanding in several deplorable instances. There are cordial exceptions, but educated Christians are loath to believe that the object of the Western mission is to minister to the Indian church, to co-operate heartily with the Indian, or really work under him.

The racial feeling is there and is a fact that we cannot ignore. Its feeling of antipathy or superiority can poison the closest friendships and issue in such foolish generalizations as: "All Indians are untruthful," or "All Europeans are materialistic." The problem becomes acute when this feeling is combined with economic or political disability. There is a passionate sensitiveness in regard to Indian manners and traditions. Their political subjection brings out a supersensitiveness and makes way for an attitude of unfriendliness and suspicion. They demand a large courtesy toward their civilization. There is danger from a paternal attitude on the part of revered missionary and administrator. This is natural in childhood, but manhood calls for brotherhood. Nor can we guard too zealously against that insidious temptation of thinking of human beings as "cases" and treating the country as "material for missionary activities." It is this impersonal treatment that unconsciously stresses more

the enterprise of evangelizing India than India's real need. Missionaries have suffered much unjust criticism and they have surmounted the barriers between Indian and European better than any other group. Frank criticism offered in a constructive spirit may make for greater missionary effectiveness. We at home must not misjudge the missionary at this point. We have accentuated race prejudice and un-Christian impersonal relationships at home with vast numbers of our fellows. The men and women who have gone to India have taken up the hardest kind of work and need the most support.

Great Britain is convinced that the co-operation of Indian and European is essential in ruling India and earnestly desires that India may get her experience in the art of self-government. There is a wholesome move toward self-government for India. The great missionary cause must be in the forefront in wiping out all feeling of estrangement. A right relation between Christian missions and the Indian church is the urgent problem of Christian statesmanship in India. The idea of brotherhood must be applied to the mighty issues of India. There is a hungering for the equality and fraternity of Christian love. We must make the Indian feel that we *need* him.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Facing the Negro Problem

Editorial comment concerning the Negro problem in the November number of the *Missionary Review of the World* reveals some of the reasons for the race riots in Washington, Chicago, and elsewhere. Restrictions imposed upon the Negroes by their white neighbors have increased their unrest. In many sections, and especially in the southern states, there has been the disposition to treat the Negro as a burden-bearer and menial worker. He has been denied proper educational facilities, housing con-

ditions, and in his desire for industrial and social improvements he has been neglected. Justice to accused Negroes has often been difficult or impossible to secure. True, there have been heinous crimes and many examples of objectionable neighborship on the part of Negroes, but among the whites of the same degree of low moral and intellectual development these same ugly facts have been too often in evidence.

Three hundred thousand Negroes served in a military capacity and did good service; hundreds of thousands worked in the muni-